

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SAJ-01 AF-08
CIAE-00 DODE-00 EA-09 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NASA-02
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FM AMEMBASSY BERN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3662
INFO USMISSION IAEA VIENNA
AMEMBASSY BRASIALIA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO
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EO 11652: NA
TAGS: PARM IAEA TECH SZ
SUBJ: SWISS RATIFICATION OF THE NPT

REF: BERN 5713

1. SUMMARY: SWISS RATIFICATION NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION
TREATY CLEARED FINAL HURDLE DEC 14 WHEN SWISS NATIONAL
COUNCIL (LOWER HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT) VOTED 98 TO 28 TO AUTHORIZE
FEDERAL COUNCIL RATIFY NPT. DEBATE PRECEDING VOTE SHOWED
THAT DESPITE GENERAL LACK OF ENTHUSIASM FOR RATIFICATION
COUNCIL MEMBERS RECOGNIZED THAT HAVING SIGNED TREATY IN
1969, SWITZERLAND STOOD TO GAIN MORE ON BALANCE BY RATIFYING
THAN REJECTING NPT.

2. DIFFICULT AND LENGTHY NATIONAL COUNCIL DEBATE ON NPT BEGAN
DEC 13 AND CONTINUED DEC 14. COUNCIL FINALLY CLOSED GENERAL DEBATE
LATE AFTERNOON BY VOTE 104 TO 21. COUNCIL ALSO DEFEATED 93
TO 40 MILLION MOTION BY EISENRING (CHRISTIAN-DEMOCRAT) TO REFER
MATTER BACK TO COMMITTEE BECAUSE COMMITTEE HAD NOT
DISCUSSED SWISS PARTICIPATION IN LONDON SUPPLIERS CLUB.
EISENRING ALSO ASKED: (A) WHETHER PART OF LONDON CLUB
ACCORDS DID NOT CONSTITUTE IMPORTANT AGREEMENT
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INCOMPATIBLE WITH SWISS CONSTITUTION; (B) WHETHER THESE

ACCORDS WERE BEYOND CONTROL OF SWISS PARLIAMENT, AS INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS; (C) WHAT AGREEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE BY WHICH SWISS REPRESENTATIVES, AND (D) WHETHER SUCH ACCORDS VIOLATED SWISS NEUTRALITY. FEDERAL COUNCILOR GRABER REPLIED THAT LONDON SUPPLIERS CLUB IS MERELY INFORMAL EFFORT BY MEMBERS TO FILL IN GAPS OF NPT BY ADOPTING UNIFORM PRACTICES AND THAT: (A) SWISS ACCORD WITH THE CLUB DOES NOT CONTRAVENE SWISS CONSTITUTION; (B) CLUB DECISIONS ARE NOT TREATIES BUT WOULD BE SUBJECT TO NORMAL REVIEW PROCEDURE IF THEY WERE; (C) SWISS AUTHORITIES HAVE MADE NO COMMITMENTS TO THE CLUB; AND (D) NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR ARMS IS NEEDED TO SAFEGUARD SWISS NEUTRALITY.

DURING DEBATE ON MOTION TO PERMIT FEDERAL COUNCIL TO RATIFY, FISCHER (NATIONAL REPUBLICAN) MOVED THAT RATIFICATION SHOULD BE MADE ONLY AFTER UN DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE AND SALT II AND III SHOWED POSITIVE RESULTS, BUT THIS MEASURE WAS ALSO REJECTED 75 TO 9.

3. PROBABLY MOST DIFFICULT MOMENT WAS REACHED WHEN JAMES SCHWARZENBACH (NATIONAL REPUBLICAN) MOVED TO SUBMIT NPT TO COMPULSORY REFERENDUM OF SWISS PEOPLE AND CANTONS. SCHWARZENBACH ARGUED THAT NPT SHOULD BE AT LEAST BE SUBJECT VOLUNTARY REFERENDUM BECAUSE IT UNLIKELY THAT FEDERAL COUNCIL, ONCE IT HAD RATIFIED NPT, WOULD EVER RESCIND ITS ADHERENCE. FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HOFER (SOCIALIST) SUPPORTED BY FONTANET (CHRISTIAN-DEMOCRAT) RESPONDED THAT REFERENDUM PROCESS HAD ALREADY BEEN CONSIDERED IF COMMITTEE AND REJECTED WITH NO SUPPORTING VOTES BECAUSE REFERENDUM REQUIRED ONLY IF TREATY WOULD CHANGE FUNDAMENTAL STRUCTURE OF SWISS STATE OR NATIONAL POLICY. THEY ARGUED THAT NATIONAL COUNCIL SHOULD MAKE DIFFICULT DECISIONS WHEN REQUIRED WITHOUT SHIFTING BURDEN TO SWISS PEOPLE. FEDERAL COUNCILOR GRABER SAID THAT NPT PROVIDES IMPORTANT SAFEGUARD FOR INTERNATIONAL ORDER AS WELL AS FOR SWISS MILITARY SECURITY AND GAVE ASSURANCE THAT FEDERAL COUNCIL WOULD AVAIL ITSELF OF NPT DECISION CLAUSE IF HIGHER SWISS NATIONAL INTERESTS REQUIRED IT. HE ADDED THAT ALL NEUTRALS EXCEPT SWITZERLAND

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HAVE RATIFIED. COUNCIL REJECTED SCHWARZENBACH MOTION 99-37 BEFORE VOTING TO RATIFY 98 TO 28.

4. SPOKESMEN OF MOST PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS SUPPORTED NPT (INDEPENDENTS, SOCIALIST, CHRISTIAN-DEMOCRATS, UNION OF CENTER DEMOCRATS AND LABOR PARTY). LABOR PARTY SPOKESMAN VINCENT (COMMUNIST) SAID THAT REJECTION OF NPT WOULD BE AGAINST SWISS MATERIAL INTERESTS AND MORAL

OBLIGATIONS. HE SAID THAT THOUGH DISARMAMENT EFFORTS HAVE SEEN LITTLE SUCCESS, DISADVANTAGES WITHOUT THE NPT EXCEED THOSE INCURRED BY ACCEDING TO IT. GAUTIER (LIBERAL AND EVANGELICAL PARTY) EXPRESSED GENERAL SENTIMENT OF THOSE WHO SUPPORTED RATIFICATION, SAID QUOTE IT WAS AS DIFFICULT TO ACCEPT NPT WITH ENTHUSIASM AS TO REJECT IT WITHOUT REGRET UNQUOTE.

5. CHAIRMAN NATIONAL COUNCIL MILITARY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE BONNARD (LEP) SAID THAT SWITZERLAND MUST PARTICIPATE IN ALL DISARMAMENT EFFORTS BUT ADDED THAT SWITZERLAND NEED NOT ACCEDE TO NPT TO DEMONSTRATE ITS PEACEFUL INTENT. BONNARD DENOUNCED PRESSURE EXERTED ON SWITZERLAND IN FORM OF OFFER OF ASSISTANCE FOR DEVELOPMENT PEACEFUL USES NUCLEAR ENERGY IN RETURN FOR NPT RATIFICATION. BONNARD SAID HE DID NOT BELIEVE SITUATION WARRANTED RATIFICATION. THOUGH HE DID NOT CRITICIZE FEDERAL COUNCIL HAVING SIGNED NPT IN 1969. BLUM (SOCIALIST) STATED THAT SWISS SOVEREIGNTY WOULD BE DIMINISHED BY RATIFICATION BUT ADDED THAT SWITZERLAND COULD NOT REMAIN SOLE EUROPEAN COUNTRY WITH FRANCE NOT TO FATIFY; REJECTION WOULD LEAD TO ISOLATION, AND IN ANY EVENT, SWITZERLAND'S NUCLEAR ARMS CAPABILITY IS LIMITED REGARDLESS WHETHER IT ADHERED TO NPT.

6. HOFER RESPONDED TO STATEMENTS OPPOSING RATIFICATION. NOTING REFERENCE TO FRENCH NON-ADHERENCE AND CRITICISM OF QUOTE SECRET UNQUOTE NATURE OF LONDON CLUB, HOFER SAID THAT FRANCE PARTICIPATES IN LONDON CLUB AS INDIRECT WAY OF PARTICIPATING IN NPT WHICH IT DECLINED TO RATIFY FOR REASONS OF NATIONAL PRESTIGE. HOFER CIRCULATED REPORT BY ELECTRO-WATT COMPANY, ZURICH WHICH SUPPORTED RATIFICATION AND RIDICULED ARGUMENTS FOR UNCLASSIFIED

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PUBLISHED KELLER THAT INTERESTS OF SWISS INDUSTRY WERE BEING IGNORED. HOFER ACKNOWLEDGED THAT NPT IN ESSENCE DISCRIMINATES BETWEEN GREAT NUCLEAR POWERS AND THOSE SMALL STATES WHICH HAVE NO NUCLEAR CAPABILITY, ADDING THAT GREAT POWERS HAVE EXISTED SINCE CONGRESS OF VIENNA AND SWITZERLAND COULD NOT CHANGE THIS REALITY. FONTANET STATED IN SUPPORT THAT IF SWISS KEPT OPEN THE OPTION FOR DEVELOPING NUCLEAR WEAPONS, IT WOULD BE TANTAMOUNT TO ADMISSION THAT SWISS FAVORED NUCLEAR ARMS PROLIFERATION. FONTANET SAID THAT THERE IS TENDENCY TO UNDER-ESTIMATE NPT INFLUENCE AND NOTED THAT QUOTE SOME DOZEN COUNTRIES, INCLUDING WEST GERMANY, ISRAEL AND SOUTH AFRICA, HESITATED TO DEVELOP NUCLEAR ARMS BECAUSE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY'S SUPPORT FOR NPT UNQUOTE. DAVIS

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